(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) and (b) The Government has formulated the policy for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in telecom sector and issued the Press Note No. 5 (2005 Series) dated 03.11.2005, according to which automatic route is available for FDI upto 49%. Approval of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board is required for FDI beyond 49% with a ceiling of 74%.

Development of National Highways in Kerala

*257. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would work out and execute a special programme in the context of neglect of Kerala in the NH development for the most backward and underdeveloped NH 49, NH 208, NH 202, NH 213 and NH 222, involving a total length of 650 kms;

(b) if so, whether there is a time bound programme for working out the proper alignment of these NHs and also for developing junctions and to provide hard shoulder on both sides throughout the length; and

(c) if so, the details of the proposals; and by when these proposals could be executed?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) National Highways 202 and 222 are not located in Kerala. Though there is no special programme for the development of the National Highways No. 49, 208, 212, 213 and 220 in Kerala, their development is taken up in a phased manner depending upon the inter se priority of works and overall availability of funds. In the last five years, improvement works amounting to Rs. 146.00 crore have been sanctioned on these National Highways and works amounting to about Rs. 63.00 crore have been identified for further improvement of these National Highways in phased manner including paved shoulders, realignment and development of junctions. However, sanction of works will depend upon overall availability and utilization of funds by the State Government.